

apparently insane and the doctor had him arrested for examination as to his sanity. He escaped and brought suit for damages against the doctor. He was not the doctor's patient and it was not "mal-practice" but the doctor had got into the trouble in the regular course of his professional work and we all agreed that the Society should defend him. The case was two days and a half in court and the doctor won. Nufsed? That member might have had insurance in every company in existence but he would not have been defended by any of them; he would have had to pay for his own defense if he had not been a member of the State Society. Worthwile?

ALL'S WELL, THAT ENDS WELL.

About a year ago we were shocked to learn that the firm of Squibb had forsaken the principles which enabled its founder, Dr. E. R. Squibb, to build up the business which so long has enjoyed the complete confidence of the medical profession, and has gone into the proprietary medicine business. The proprietary which the firm was shown to be exploiting was not of the kind that most pharmaceutical houses feel justified or obliged to put out because "everybody's doing it," namely a shot-gun mixture ("ethical specialty") asserted to have been somebody's favorite prescription and provided with a therapeutic title. Instead, the Squibb proprietary belonged to the type which makes use of some drug whose action is well known and positive, to which some addition is made, which it was claimed vastly improves the previously used preparations of the medicament. As is customary in such cases, the preparation was marketed under vague and misleading claims as to composition, and provided with a misleading name. The preparation was called Thoremadin and on examination was found to be a sulphuric acid paste consisting of sulphuric acid, made into a paste with inert lead sulphate and "doctored up" with some radio-active earths, chiefly thorium sulphate. The nature of the preparation was brought out in a report by Dr. W. A. Pusey who, from experiments, became convinced that the preparation owed its virtues to sulphuric acid only. This was confirmed by the analysis made in the A. M. A. Laboratory (Jour. A. M. A., March 7, 1912, p. 716).

While so far the recited events are commonplace, the sequel is not. It shows that, though in new hands, the house of E. R. Squibb and Sons proposes to retain the confidence and respect of the medical profession.

Shortly after Pusey's article and the A. M. A. Chemical Laboratory analysis had appeared, the firm stated how it had come to be connected with the preparation—it was a story of a persuasive "promoter" and a few over-enthusiastic practitioners. At the same time the firm announced (Jour. A. M. A., April 13, 1912, p. 1135) that the product had been submitted to the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry and that its sale would be discontinued, if the finding of Pusey—that radio-activity played no material part in its action—was confirmed by the Council.

The Council now has published its report (Jour. A. M. A., Feb. 8, 1913, p. 462) which is to the effect that, when tried side by side with a simple sulphuric acid mixture, experts were unable to distinguish any difference in action between these two preparations. Thoremadin thus having been shown to depend for its action on sulphuric acid, the claims to be unfounded and the name to be misleading, the house of Squibb announces that, in accordance with its agreement, it has now discontinued the sale of Thoremadin.

While the action of the firm is nothing more than what would be expected of a concern wishing to do an honest business, nevertheless, the temptations of proprietary exploitation nowadays are so great that the firm should be given credit for its action. Beyond this, however, the medical profession should feel satisfaction in the knowledge that there is at least one large pharmaceutical house which has in the past and no doubt will in the future, taboo the proprietary medicine business.

DISCOURAGING WORK.

The prosecution of illegal, unlicensed, practitioners of medicine is, in most places at least, a heart-breaking work. It is almost impossible to get a square deal in a police court; the evidence may be complete and without flaw, but for personal or political reasons the judge will discharge or suspend sentence or dismiss the case. In Los Angeles a lot of very good work has been done and good results have been obtained, but that was largely due to the tremendous energy of one man, Mr. Morrow, and to the fact that the city was so aggravatingly overrun with advertising quacks that the public—or a goodly portion of it—was disgusted and in sympathy. In Oakland some result has been obtained but only after great effort, at considerable expense and with many disheartening setbacks. As an illustration we publish, on another page, a portion of the record in the case against an unlicensed person who was convicted. It is illuminating. When a judge of a superior court will voice the sentiments which emanated from the court in this case, one may well say "what's the use!" and quit.

CHINESE MEDICINE.

The Pacific Coast members of the medical profession have had very definite notions concerning the absurdities of so-called Chinese medicine. Elsewhere in this issue is printed an article on the subject by a medical missionary, Dr. C. R. Roys of Wei-hsien, China, who discusses the subject from a wide and first hand knowledge. His paper on the subject is therefore of real value. Not the least of what Dr. Roys states is the point which he makes, judging from the newspaper advertisements and sign-board publicity of American patent medicines akin to those of the Chinese, that we of our own land are after all not so greatly superior to the heathen (?) upon whom we would look down with such scorn and pity.